

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. Every voivodship capital in Poland has its own prison which also serves as an interrogation center and place of detention for criminal suspects. The more commonly known prisons are:

Plock (Warsaw)
Mokotow (Warsaw)
Muntelupieh (Krakow)
Wadowice (Krakow)
Barczewo (Olsztyn)
Sieradz (Lodz)
Myslowice (Stalinogrod)
Lublin Zamek (Lublin)
Rawicz (political prison)
Wronki (political prison)
Sztum (political prison)

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50X1-HUM

- 2 -

2. In view of the fact that the pre-war prisons do not adequately fill the security needs of the country, the UB has organized several work camps in the country where petty criminals--transgressors of the economic statutes, speculators, black-marketeers, and the like--are confined. Four such camps are now operating in Poland:

Jaworzno (Krakow)

Potulice

Warsaw (Giesia)

Wisnicz (Krakow)

3. In general, the conditions in the work camps are considerably better than in the prisons, where the food is poor. The worst situation is in the political prisons where the inmates are deprived of any manner of work or activity. However, the lot of the political prisoners was at one time mitigated by the fact that most of them received food packages from friends and relatives. However, the practice of permitting prisoners to receive food packages was generally abused and therefore stopped about two years ago. However, prisoners are still permitted to receive money in limited amounts with which they can buy food of low grade such as bread, bacon, onions, sausage, and the like. Before this new rule came into effect, prisoners used to receive luxury items in considerable quantity so that through gifts they often could ingratiate themselves with their keepers. 50X1-HUM in Poland there exists a certain solidarity and mutual aid among families of political prisoners and that the Communist Party is well aware of it.
4. The most serious problem in the Polish prisons is the overcrowded state of these institutions. This was of great concern to the authorities in 1953 and resulted in a prison survey which revealed that 80 to 90 percent of the inmates were workers or peasants, in short, the proletariat, and not the bourgeois elements, the acknowledged enemy of the regime. The survey resulted in a release of 40,000 persons from Polish prisons, an ~~amex~~ ^{amex} by which was timed with the trial and conviction of Lavrenti BERIA. The release of the 40,000 prisoners, which basically did not involve political prisoners, had its practical aspect. It was used in the Party circles to explain the serious economic shortcomings in the country. The Party chiefs explained to members that there was a shortage of labor, the persons in prison could not work, and that the kulaks were responsible for the situation which was rapidly deteriorating. Following the necessary exploitation of the situation by the Party, the mass prisoner release was effected with some fanfare to demonstrate the magnanimous attitude of the regime.
5. After BERIA's trial, the volume and rate of arrests declined in Poland. The daily UB bulletin which details the number and type of arrests, searches, incidents, etc., showed a sharp drop. It was a well-established fact that at this time UB agents actually refrained from making arrests for fear of retaliation. The situation became so critical that the Party levelled accusations at the UB for shirking of its duties. On 1 November 1953, MBP (Ministry of Public Security) chief RADKIEWICZ called together the voivodship UB office heads and apprised them of the declining arrests. The upshot of the talks was a revision of the regulations governing arrests and establishing the methods by which investigations and interrogations were to be carried out so as to give maximum legal protection to UB agents.

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